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Atty. Docket No. OPP031054US
Serial No: 10/734,818

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method to fabricate a semiconductor device comprising:
forming a nitride layer on an interlayer insulating layer;
forming a photoresist layer on the nitride layer;
forming a photoresist pattern from the photoresist layer, the photoresist pattern having a thickness that depends on a thickness and an etch rate of the interlayer insulating layer and an etch rate of the photoresist pattern;
etching the nitride layer using the photoresist pattern as a mask;
~~simultaneously etching the photoresist pattern and the interlayer insulating layer~~
together with the photoresist pattern; and
setting an etch stop point as a point at which the photoresist pattern is removed by etching.
2. (Original) A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the nitride layer has a thickness of approximately 200-800 Å.
3. (Original) A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the photoresist pattern has a thickness of approximately 2500-3500 Å.

Atty. Docket No. OPP031054US
Serial No: 10/734,818

4. (Original) A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising, after the photoresist pattern is removed, over-etching the interlayer insulating layer using the nitride layer as a mask.

5. (Currently Amended) A method to fabricate a semiconductor device comprising:
forming a first mask layer on an etch target layer;
forming a second mask layer on the first mask layer;
forming a first mask pattern by selectively etching the second mask layer, the first mask pattern having a thickness that depends on a thickness and an etch rate of the etch target layer and an etch rate of the first mask pattern;
forming a second mask pattern by etching the first mask layer using the first mask pattern as a mask;
~~etching the first mask pattern and the etch target layer together with the first mask pattern, wherein the first mask pattern is etched~~ using the second mask pattern as a mask; and
setting an etch stop point as a point at which the first mask pattern is removed by etching.

6. (Original) A method as defined in claim 5, wherein the first mask layer and the etch target layer have a same etch rate.

7. (Original) A method as defined in claim 5, wherein the first mask layer and the etch target layer have a different etch rate.

Atty. Docket No. OPP031054US
Serial No: 10/734,818

8. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim 6, wherein a thickness of the first mask layer is further determined by a desired etch depth in the etch target layer.

9. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim 8, wherein the first mask layer ~~is made from~~ comprises a same material as the etch target layer.

10. (Currently Amended) A method to fabricate a semiconductor device comprising:
forming a nitride layer on an interlayer insulating layer;
forming a photoresist layer on the nitride layer;
forming a photoresist pattern from the photoresist layer, the photoresist pattern having a thickness that depends on a thickness and an etch rate of the interlayer insulating layer and an etch rate of photoresist pattern;

etching the nitride layer using the photoresist pattern as a mask;
~~simultaneously etching the photoresist pattern and the interlayer insulating layer together with the photoresist pattern;~~ and
setting an etch stop point as a point at which the nitride layer is exposed.

11. (Currently Amended) A method to fabricate a semiconductor device comprising:
forming a first mask layer on an etch target layer;
forming a second mask layer on the first mask layer;

Atty. Docket No. OPP031054US
Serial No: 10/734,818

forming a first mask pattern by selectively etching the second mask layer, the first mask pattern having a thickness that depends on a thickness and an etch rate of the etch target layer and an etch rate of first mask pattern;

forming a second mask pattern by etching the first mask layer using the first mask pattern as a mask;

etching ~~the first mask pattern and~~ the etch target layer together with the first mask pattern, wherein the first mask pattern is etched using the second mask pattern as a mask; and

setting an etch stop point as a point at which the second mask pattern is exposed.

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